

Towards a research project for rubber smallholders

Cirad Experience & Research proposal

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Panel 3 : Current challenges in research for smallholder rubber plantations

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Challenge for smallholdings

- Economic sustainability
- Social sustainability
- Ecological sustainability

Specific challenges

Land constraints

Labor constraints

Rubber farm management

Relevant questions of research for rubber smallholdings

**Which innovative techniques to improve productivity,
labor and land ?**

**What are the conditions for smallholders to adopt the
new techniques ?**



Cirad approach

1/ Learning from the smallholdings

Describe and analyze the characteristics of farms and their technical and economical performances.

- zoning of agricultural situations
- typology of farms

Establish the diversity of farms to determine what support to provide.

Cirad approach

1/ Learning from the smallholdings

Examples

- Thailand: socio-economic analysis of tapping system PSU-CIRAD, 2007,
- Cambodia: typology and technical-economic modeling of small rubber farms (Agricultural Productivity Improvement Project (APIP-SRRC 1997-2005, and Transitory Project for Rubber smallholder, PHF 2005-2007)
- Vietnam: Agricultural Diversification Project 1998-2002

Cirad approach

2/ Implementation of on-farm trials

Test of techniques or types of production organization with farmers in different socio economic conditions

It is a matter of:

- analyzing with farmers their technical, economic and social impact on farm functioning
- studying what farmers think of these new techniques and/or types of organization
- determining how acceptable they are taken on board by farmers

Cirad approach

2/ Implementation of on-farm trials

Test of techniques or types of production organization with farmers in different socio economic conditions

Examples:

Cambodia:

- tapping systems, clone trials, 63 trials (APIP-SRRC 1998-2004)

Thailand: DCA on farms , 2007; 8 trials, 2008;16 trials

Cirad approach

3/ Analysis of the diffusion of the innovation

Monitoring adoption and what becomes techniques

A network of reference farms is created, as the same time as the on-farm trials are set up.

Relevant project of research for rubber smallholdings

Program in Cambodia: AFD

- **Scientific and technical assistance to CRRI**
Experimental fields in the research centre: breeding and tapping systems (2005- 2007)
- **Scheduled program: socio-economic and technical research for developing rubber farms and national process to control the plant material conformity in the bud wood gardens**



Relevant project of research for rubber smallholdings

Program in Thailand Hevea Research Platform in Partnership (HRPP)

From the project “Improving the Rubber Tree Productivity” HRPP, in May 2008

Strengthening existing projects: *Production – Quality – Environment*

Socio economic aspects

Master degree in Rubber Science

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Relevant project of research for rubber smallholdings

Existing program in Thailand:

- Socio-economic analysis of the Tapping Systems in different zones of Thailand (start 2007)
- Socio-economic feasibility of low intensity tapping systems in the South of Thailand (start 2010)
- Evolution of the Rubber Growing in the South (2009)
- Economic impact of rubber growing in the lowland areas (2009)
- On-Farm Trials for Innovation on Tapping Systems in the Southern Thailand (DCA, Songkhla province, 2006)



HRPP / Higher Education Project on Rubber

Professional Master Degree in

Natural Rubber Production, Technology and Management

Training Aims

- Develop and modernize the natural rubber production sector in sustainable and social-responsible ways**
- Give a multi-disciplinary scientific and technical knowledge enabling the students to contribute in the fast-changing industry and markets worldwide.**

CONCLUSION

This is glimpse of the key elements to put forward a proposal for a common research program in support of development operations in the three countries.

Challenges are common to the three countries. R & D activities are running in each of them.

The three countries can learn from each other experience and knowledge. A mutual cooperation will benefit to farmers in a regional approach.

A collaborative project could be set up with the support of HRPP.

Thank you for your kind attention

